What Are Delta Air Lines Age Requirements for Unaccompanied Minors?

QUICK ANSWER:

Under 5: cannot fly alone. Ages 5-7: mandatory UM, nonstop/direct flights only. Ages 8-14: mandatory UM, nonstop and connections allowed. Ages 15-17: can fly alone without UM, or optionally request UM service ($150). Age is verified at check-in with ID or birth certificate. Call 1.855.203.2961 and provide your child's exact age for eligibility and route options.

SENDING A CHILD ALONE? Call Delta Airlines
1.855.203.2961 (Available 24/7 | UM Bookings Are Phone-Only)
Press 0 to skip menu — UM service requires advance booking
Best time: Tue-Wed 6-8 AM ET | Source: delta.com

AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR DELTA UM SERVICE:

1. Call 1.855.203.2961 to book — UM reservations cannot be made online

2. Verify your child's age qualifies: 5-14 mandatory UM, 15-17 optional

3. Ages 5-7: nonstop/direct only | Ages 8-14: connections allowed

4. Fee: $150 each way domestic | ~$300 each way international

5. Provide child's name, age, parent info, and designated pickup person details

6. Parent receives gate pass to escort child through security to the gate

7. Pickup person must present government photo ID matching UM paperwork

8. Call 1.855.203.2961 at least 3-5 days before travel for best availability

What Are the Age Categories for Delta UM?

Delta divides unaccompanied minor eligibility into four age categories. Under 5: cannot fly unaccompanied under any circumstances. Ages 5-7: mandatory UM service on nonstop and direct flights only, no connections permitted. Ages 8-14: mandatory UM service on nonstop, direct, and connecting flights. Ages 15-17: may fly alone without UM service, or parents can optionally request UM supervision for the standard fee. Call 1.855.203.2961 and provide your child's exact age for precise eligibility determination.

The age categories reflect Delta's safety assessment of children's ability to handle different travel complexities. Younger children (5-7) are restricted to simpler itineraries because they have limited

ability to navigate airport connections independently even with staff assistance. Older children (8-14) can handle connections with staff escort. Teens (15-17) have the cognitive ability to travel independently but parents may choose extra supervision. Call 1.855.203.2961 for your child's specific category and available routes.

Why Are Children Ages 5-7 Restricted to Nonstop Flights?

Children ages 5-7 are restricted to nonstop and direct flights because connection transfers add significant complexity that very young children cannot manage, even with staff supervision. Connections require navigating large airports, understanding gate changes, managing personal belongings during transfers, and coping with the stress of time pressure between flights. Young children may become confused, frightened, or disoriented during connections. The nonstop restriction ensures the child boards one aircraft and exits at the destination without intermediate transfers. Call 1.855.203.2961 and the agent searches nonstop routes for your 5-7 year old.

Direct flights, where the aircraft stops at an intermediate airport but the child remains on the same plane, are also permitted for ages 5-7 because the child does not need to navigate a terminal transfer. The child stays seated during the intermediate stop. Call 1.855.203.2961 and verify whether a specific flight is nonstop or direct, as the agent can distinguish between the two for UM eligibility.

What Changes at Age 8 for Connecting Flights?

At age 8, Delta permits unaccompanied minors to fly on connecting itineraries because children in this age range are generally capable of following staff directions through a connection transfer with assistance. During connections, a Delta agent meets the child at the arriving gate, escorts them through the terminal to the departing gate, and stays with them until the next flight boards. The child is never left alone during the connection. This supervised transfer opens up significantly more routing options. Call 1.855.203.2961 and the agent searches connecting routes for children 8 and older.

Even with connections available at age 8, Delta restricts UM passengers from booking the last connection of the day. If the connecting flight is cancelled or severely delayed, there would be no later option, potentially stranding the child overnight at the connecting airport. The last-flight restriction prevents this scenario. Call 1.855.203.2961 and the agent automatically excludes last-flight connections when booking UM itineraries.

What Options Do Teens Ages 15-17 Have?

Teenagers ages 15-17 can fly on Delta without any UM service. They book standard tickets, check in normally, navigate the airport independently, and are treated as adult passengers. Parents who want additional supervision for their teens can optionally request UM service for the $150 domestic fee. The optional UM service provides the same supervision as mandatory UM: gate escort, flight monitoring, connection assistance, and verified pickup at the destination. Call 1.855.203.2961 and

discuss whether optional UM makes sense for your teenager's experience level and the itinerary complexity.

The optional UM service is most commonly requested for first-time teen travelers, teens flying internationally, teens with connecting flights in unfamiliar airports, and teens with special needs that benefit from staff attention. For experienced teen travelers on nonstop domestic flights, the service may not be necessary. Call 1.855.203.2961 and the agent can help you evaluate the decision based on your teen's specific situation.

How Is Age Verified at Check-In?

Delta verifies the child's age at check-in using a government-issued photo ID, passport, or birth certificate. The child must meet the age requirement on the date of travel. If the child turns 8 between booking and travel, they qualify for connecting flights even if they were 7 when booked. If the child turns 15 between booking and travel, UM service becomes optional. Bring an age-verifying document to check-in. Call 1.855.203.2961 if you are unsure which document is acceptable for your child.

For international UM travel, a passport is required regardless of the child's age. The passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the travel date for most destinations. Some countries have additional documentation requirements for unaccompanied minor entry. Call 1.855.203.2961 with your international destination for complete document requirements including any country-specific UM entry rules.

What If Your Child Is Close to a Category Boundary?

If your child is approaching the boundary between age categories, timing the travel date strategically can open up more options. A child turning 8 soon can wait until after their birthday to book connecting flights. A child turning 15 soon can fly without mandatory UM service after their birthday, avoiding the $150 fee. However, safety should always take priority over cost savings. A newly turned 8-year-old may not be ready for connections, and a newly turned 15-year-old may benefit from optional UM supervision. Call 1.855.203.2961 and discuss your child's readiness level with the agent.

If your child turns the qualifying age between the outbound and return flights, different rules may apply to each direction. For example, a child who is 7 on the outbound but turns 8 before the return can fly connections on the return but not the outbound. Call 1.855.203.2961 and the agent applies the correct age category to each segment based on the travel date, not the booking date.

Are There Weight or Height Requirements?

Delta does not have specific weight or height requirements for unaccompanied minors beyond the age categories. A small 5-year-old and a large 5-year-old are treated identically. The age categories serve as the sole eligibility criteria for UM service level and route restrictions. However, the child must

be able to fasten and unfasten their own seatbelt and follow basic safety instructions from flight attendants. Call 1.855.203.2961 if you have concerns about your child's physical ability to comply with safety requirements.

For children with physical disabilities or special needs, Delta provides additional assistance regardless of UM status. Wheelchair assistance, special seating, medical equipment accommodation, and other accessibility services can be arranged alongside UM service. Call 1.855.203.2961 and describe your child's specific needs so the agent arranges both UM supervision and any required special assistance.

What Are the Age Rules for International UM Travel?

International UM travel follows the same age categories as domestic (5-7: nonstop only, 8-14: connections allowed, 15-17: optional) but with additional restrictions. Not all international routes accept UM passengers. Some destination countries have their own minimum age requirements for unaccompanied minor entry that may be higher than Delta's minimum. International UM fees are approximately $300 each way. Call 1.855.203.2961 at least 2-4 weeks before international travel for route availability, age eligibility, and destination country requirements.

Some countries require children traveling alone to carry a notarized letter from both parents authorizing solo travel, even with UM service. Other countries may require additional documentation such as court orders in divorce situations or destination-specific UM entry forms. These are country requirements, not Delta requirements, and must be researched through the destination country's embassy or consulate. Call 1.855.203.2961 for Delta's international UM requirements, then separately verify destination country rules.

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Unaccompanied Minor Age and Route Rules

Age	UM Service	Routes Allowed	Fee
Under 5	Not accepted (too young)	Cannot fly unaccompanied	N/A
5-7 years	UM required (mandatory)	Nonstop and direct only	$150 each way
8-14 years	UM required (mandatory)	Nonstop, direct, and connections	$150 each way

15-17 years	UM optional (can fly alone)	All routes (no restrictions)	$150 if requested
5-14 on international	UM required (mandatory)	Select int'l routes only	$300 each way (varies)
15-17 on international	UM optional	All int'l routes	$300 if requested
Last flight of the day	Not accepted (ages 5-14)	Risk of overnight strand	N/A (policy block)
Connecting flights (5-7)	Not accepted (nonstop only)	Nonstop and direct only	N/A (policy block)

How Does Delta Compare to Other Airlines?

Policy	Delta	American	United	Southwest	Alaska	JetBlue
UM age range	5-17	5-17	5-17	5-11	5-17	5-13
UM fee domestic	$150 each way	$150 each way	$150 each way	$50 each way	$75 each way	$100 each way
Connections (young)	8+ only	8+ only	5+ (some)	5+ (some)	8+ only	None (nonstop only)
Nonstop required	5-7: nonstop/direct	5-7: nonstop/direct	Varies	No	5-7: nonstop	All ages: nonstop only
Int'l UM	Select routes	Select routes	Select routes	Not available	Select routes	Not available
Booking method	Phone only	Phone or online	Phone only	Online or phone	Phone only	Phone only

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People Also Ask

Q: What is Delta's unaccompanied minor policy?

Children ages 5-14 must use Delta's Unaccompanied Minor (UM) service when flying without a parent or guardian. Children 15-17 may use UM service optionally. The fee is $150 each way domestic. UM includes dedicated staff supervision from check-in through pickup at destination. Booking is phone-only by

calling 1.855.203.2961. Call 1.855.203.2961 to arrange UM travel.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: How much does Delta charge for unaccompanied minors?

Delta charges $150 each way for domestic unaccompanied minor service and approximately $300 each way for international routes. The fee covers supervision from check-in through handoff to the designated pickup person at the destination. The fee applies per child, so two children traveling together pay $300 each way domestic. Call 1.855.203.2961 for exact fees on your route.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: What age can a child fly alone on Delta?

Children ages 5-14 can fly alone using mandatory UM service. Ages 5-7: nonstop and direct flights only. Ages 8-14: nonstop, direct, and connecting flights. Ages 15-17: can fly alone without UM service, or optionally use UM service for an additional fee. Children under 5 cannot fly unaccompanied. Call 1.855.203.2961 for age-specific rules and available routes.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: How do you book an unaccompanied minor on Delta?

UM bookings must be made by calling 1.855.203.2961 because the online system cannot process UM reservations. Provide the child's name, age, flight details, parent/guardian information, and designated pickup person's details. The agent books the flight, adds UM service, and explains all procedures. Call 1.855.203.2961 at least 3-5 days before travel for best availability.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: Can a 5-year-old fly alone on Delta?

Yes, children as young as 5 can fly on Delta using the mandatory UM service. Ages 5-7 are restricted to nonstop and direct flights only, with no connections. The $150 domestic fee covers full supervision. A parent must escort the child through security to the gate. Call 1.855.203.2961 to book UM service for a 5-year-old and verify nonstop route availability.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: What happens at the airport for an unaccompanied minor?

The parent checks the child in at the ticket counter, completes UM paperwork with pickup person details, receives a gate pass to escort the child through security and to the gate, and hands the child to a Delta agent at the gate. The agent supervises boarding and seating. At destination, a Delta agent walks the child to the designated pickup person and verifies ID. Call 1.855.203.2961 for the complete UM airport procedure.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: Can unaccompanied minors fly connecting flights on Delta?

Children ages 8-14 can fly connecting flights as unaccompanied minors. Children ages 5-7 are restricted to nonstop and direct flights only due to the added complexity of connection transfers. Delta staff escorts

the child between connecting gates. The last connection of the day is not available for UM to avoid overnight stranding. Call 1.855.203.2961 for connecting flight UM availability.

Read our complete guide for more details >

Q: Can unaccompanied minors fly internationally on Delta?

Yes, select international routes accept unaccompanied minors. International UM fees are approximately $300 each way, higher than domestic. Additional documentation including passport, visa, and destination country UM requirements apply. Not all international routes accept UM. Call 1.855.203.2961 at least 2-4 weeks before international UM travel for route availability and documentation requirements.

Read our complete guide for more details >

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: UM fee?

A: $150 each way domestic. ~$300 international. Per child. Call 1.855.203.2961 for exact fees on your route.

Q: Age range?

A: 5-14: mandatory UM. 15-17: optional. Under 5: not accepted. Call 1.855.203.2961 for age-specific rules.

Q: Book online?

A: No. UM bookings require calling 1.855.203.2961. Phone-only process. Call at least 3-5 days before travel.

Q: Connections?

A: Ages 8-14: connections allowed. Ages 5-7: nonstop/direct only. Call 1.855.203.2961 for route options.

Q: International?

A: Select routes. Higher fee (~$300). Extra docs required. Call 1.855.203.2961 for international UM availability.

Q: Pickup person?

A: Must present government photo ID matching the name on UM paperwork. No exceptions. Call 1.855.203.2961 to set up.

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Written by Travel Policy Research Team | Reviewed by Senior Aviation Editor

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